

Youth Leadership Summit

Overview: While the adult delegations from various cities across the country and other countries – including China, South Korea, South Africa – were discussing digital diplomacy, the theme of the Youth Leadership Summit was global water policy.

Day 1:

Check-in during the late afternoon

Orientation and introduction: Watched the documentary *Water Wars* (2009) which details critical water issues around the globe, from floods and droughts in Bangladesh, dam-building in India, drought in the American Southwest, Hurricane Katrina, and water management in the Netherlands

Professors and other experts in the field of water policy discussed conservation issues, especially in light of the current drought in California

Some interesting facts about water consumption:

2.54 gallons of water needed to make 1 gallon of coke

1.84 gallons of water to make 1 16 oz bottle of water

15.6 gallons of water to make 1 gallon of beer

101 gallons of water to make 1 pound of wool

24 gallons of water to make 1 pound of plastic

1800 gallons of water to make the cotton in a pair of jeans

39090 gallons of water to make a car

*What can we do in our cities to conserve water?

*Recommended read: *The Big Thirst*

Day 2:

Opening ceremony took place in front of San Jose City Hall. Students carried the flags of the cities present. Speeches were given by several SCI members and other dignitaries.

Students were divided into 19 groups that represented 19 different countries (I represented China) and discussed water policy in their respective countries

Students were later divided into 5 large groups that discussed 5 different topics: water and power, water and public health, water and security, water and social change, and water and agriculture

Dionne Warwick concert!

Day 3:

Students visited a local marshland and wildlife refuge in the morning.

Gave presentations on our countries and topics in the afternoon.

Listened to speeches from a mayor of a city in Japan and other dignitaries present. Congressman Mike Honda and Secretary Norman Mineta were also present.

Later, two representatives from each of the 5 topic groups presented.

Awards ceremony: Several Sister Cities programs and outstanding members were honored for their achievements and contributions.

What should we do back home?

Water policy, on both the local and international scales, are not issues many citizens are knowledgeable about. Especially in light of the current drought in California, it would be a good idea to educate citizens about this crucial topic. People also may not realize how much water they consume regularly and education may help conservation efforts.